



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

August 3, 2021.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments are requested regarding: whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments regarding this information collection received by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] will be considered. Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain. Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review - Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

TITLE: Rural Energy for America Program

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0570-0067

SUMMARY OF COLLECTION: Rural Development is implementing a new consolidated guaranteed loan regulation, 7 CFR 5001, OneRD Guarantee Loan Program. This final rule created a new guaranteed loan program which combined four existing guaranteed loan programs under one regulatory platform. The four existing programs are: (1) the Community Facilities Program (0575-0137), (2) the Water and Waste Disposal Program (0572-0122), (3) the Business and Industry Program (0570-0014), and (4) the Rural Energy for America Program (formerly known as the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Program – 0570-0050) under Title IX, Section 9007 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). The result of this new program removes the Guarantee Loan program from 7 CFR 4280 and thus requires a revision to the existing 7 CFR 4280 regulation.

The Rural Energy for America Program, which supersedes the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Program under Title IX, Section 9006 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Farm Bill) is designed to help agricultural producers and rural small business reduce energy cost and consumption, develop new income streams, and help meet the nation's critical energy needs by requiring the Secretary of Agriculture to provide grants and/or loan guarantees for several types of projects as follows:

- Grants and grants and loan guarantees (combined funding) to agricultural producers and rural small businesses to purchase renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements.
- Grants to eligible entities to provide energy audits and renewable energy development assistance to enable agricultural producers and rural small businesses to become more energy efficient and to use renewable energy technologies and resources. Entities eligible to receive grants under this program are State, tribal and local governments; land-

grant colleges and universities or other institutions of higher learning; rural electric cooperatives; public power entities; Resource Conservation and Development Councils and instrumentalities of local, state, and federal governments. These grant funds may be used to conduct and promote energy audits; provide recommendations and information on how to improve the energy efficiency of the operations of the agricultural producers and rural small businesses; and provide recommendations and information on how to use renewable energy technologies and resources in the operations. No more than five (5) percent of the grant can be used for administrative purposes. Agricultural producers and rural small businesses for which a grantee is conducting an energy audit must pay at least 25 percent of the cost of the energy audit.

NEED AND USE OF THE INFORMATION: For RES/EEI applications, this information will be used to determine applicant eligibility, to determine project eligibility and technical merit, and to ensure that grantees operate on a sound basis and use funds for authorized purposes. For EA/REDA applications, this information will be used to determine applicant and project eligibility and to ensure that funds are used for authorized purposes.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Business or other for-profit; Individuals; State, local government, or Tribal

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS: 1,434

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES: Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Monthly; Annually

TOTAL BURDEN HOURS: 85,191

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*Billing Code 3410-XY

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